

THE
Aldburgh
C O N N E C T I O N

City of Villages

Walter Hall, Sunday, May 2, 2010, 2:30 pm



We wish to thank Susan White
for sponsoring Lucia Cesaroni

Michael and Anne Gough
for sponsoring Allyson McHardy

David Broadhurst
for sponsoring Lawrence Wiliford

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for sponsoring Benjamin Covey

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We are also grateful to James and Connie MacDougall
for providing the flowers on stage

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We are performing on
the Edith McConica Steinway

City of Villages

A Singers' Tour of Toronto

Lucia Cesaroni, soprano

Allyson McHardy, mezzo

Lawrence Wiliford, tenor

Benjamin Covey, baritone

Stephen Ralls and Bruce Ubukata, piano

The Yellow River Ensemble:

Kim Chow-Morris, bangdi

Patty Chan, erhu

Miao Xiaoyun, daruan

Surprisingly for a city largely based on a grid pattern, and in addition to its actual downtown core, Toronto possesses quite a number of distinct nuclei, village centres if you will, each with a different character of its own. These personalities have been created by a number of factors: by geographical features such as ravines or escarpments, by historical developments related to trades or professions, by the differing processes of immigration over more than two centuries and so on. A balanced overview of all this rich diversity is impossible to attempt in one afternoon. Our concert today will therefore follow a winding trail among the various "villages" and alight from time to time on historical or cultural points of interest which we have selected chiefly, in the manner of the best tourists, because they take our fancy.

The personal nature of this tour has encouraged us to include a number of pieces which have been commissioned by the Aldeburgh Connection - songs by John Beckwith, John Greer and Erik Ross, as well as excerpts from *Bruce's Clavier-Book*, written by Derek Holman in memory of a number of friends whose influence on us, or on our city, has been crucial.

We approach today's project from an unabashedly European, even British, viewpoint. It is our great pleasure, therefore, to be able to provide a momentary counterbalance in the form of performances by our friends of the Yellow River Ensemble, luminaries of one of the most significant communities of present-day Toronto.

Join us on our historical, cultural and geographical tour of a fascinating city!

INTRODUCTION

Toronto (*Anna Jameson*) John Greer (b.1954)
(Studies and Rambles of Wasagewanoqua) (soprano)

DOWNTOWN

The Irish Emigrant (*Helen, Lady Dufferin*) George Barker (1812-76)
(tenor)

The Vagabond (*Robert Louis Stevenson*) Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)
(Songs of Travel) (baritone)

Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks William H. Hewlett (1873-1940)
(*Psalm V*) (quartet)

C'est ainsi que tu es (*Louise de Vilmorin*) Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)
(*Métamorphoses*) (mezzo)

A Man and his Flute (*Miriam Waddington*) John Beckwith (b.1927)
(soprano)

The Judge's Song (*W.S.Gilbert*) Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900)
(Trial by Jury) (baritone)

THE UNIVERSITY

Remembering the First Master of Massey College Derek Holman (b.1931)
(Bruce's Clavier-Book) (piano solo)

IMMIGRATION

Non ti scordar di me (soprano) words and music by Ernesto de Curtis (1875-1937)

Jamaican Rumba (piano-duet) Arthur Benjamin (1893-1960)

Agua do rio que la vai (*anon.*) Ernesto Halffter (1905-89)
(Seis canciones portuguesas) (mezzo)

ROSEDALE

Recollections of Rosedale Heights (Bruce's Clavier-Book) Holman
(piano solo)

Stillness (tenor) words and music by Harry Somers (1925-99)

DON VALLEY**In Memory of Greta** (Bruce's Clavier-Book) (piano solo)

Holman

Come to the vale of the beautiful Don: An Invocation Mrs G.A.Gilbert (fl. c. 1879)
(G. A. Gilbert) (soprano)

INTERMISSIONduring which tea will be served in the
Torel Room, with the kind assistance of students
of the Opera Division, Faculty of Music

CHINATOWN**Two pieces** (Yellow River Ensemble)**Busily Carting Public Grains****Racing Horses****Towered Camelot** (*Alfred Tennyson*)
(The Four Seasons) (tenor)

Holman

THE ANNEX**Der Engel** (*Mathilde Wesendonck*)
(Wesendonck-Lieder) (mezzo)

Richard Wagner (1813-83)

Khristos voskres, Op.26/6
(*D. Merejkovsky*) (baritone)

Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943)

Brunswick Avenue (*Dennis Lee*) (mezzo)

Erik Ross (b.1972)

FOREST HILL**For Ruby, con amore** (Bruce's Clavier-Book)
(piano solo)

Holman

EAST END, WEST END

Le Parfum impérissable, Op.76/1 Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)
(Leconte de Lisle) (baritone)

The Resurrection of Nature (*Anna Jameson*) Greer
(Studies and Rambles of Wasagewanoqua) (soprano)

The Humber “Fairy” (*John Imrie*) (tenor) J.F. Johnstone (1831-1913)

EPILOGUE

Oh! you Canadian town (*Stanley K. Bennett*) (quartet) N. Fraser Allan (fl. 1911-40)

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THE ALDEBURGH CONNECTION CONCERT SOCIETY

FOUNDING PATRON: Sir Peter Pears

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Steuart Bedford, Christopher Newton, C.M., Catherine Robbin

In honour of their past service to the Society,
 we have introduced a new category of Emeritus Director,
 recognizing the enormous contributions of time, energy
 and expertise made in years past by the following:

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Those who missed our most recent Sunday concert, *Hugo Wolf, the Mighty Miniaturist*, featuring MONICA WHICHER, MICHAEL COLVIN and BRETT POLEGATO, may like to know that the recording by CBC Radio will be broadcast on IN CONCERT (Host, Bill Richardson) between 11 am and 3 pm on Sunday, May 16.

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Bayfield Festival of Song

Booking is now open for the fourth Festival, which runs from June 5 to June 13.

Tickets sell out quickly, as many of you will know!

Brochures are available on our ticket table - or visit:

www.aldeburghconnection.org

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Sunday Series, 2010/11 season:

October 24 *The Patrons' Salon* - hosted by Steuart Bedford,
Christopher Newton and Catherine Robbin

December 5 *The Year of Song* - Schumann's greatest songs

January 30 *A Shropshire Lad in Ontario* - music in the career of Campbell McInnes

March 6 *C'est mon plaisir* - music in the house of Isabella Stewart Gardner

May 1 *A Spring Schubertiad*

Discovery Series:

Tuesdays, November 2 and February 15

Our season's brochure in June will contain full details and booking information.

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Copies of our CDs are available during the intermission, or through our website:
www.aldeburghconnection.org

Box office revenues cover only a portion of our operating budget; grants, corporate funding and individual donations are needed for the balance. Please consider joining one of our supporting categories: Benefactor (\$1,000 or more), Champion (\$500 or more), Patron (\$200 or more), Supporter (\$100 or more) and Friend (\$50 or more). Donations may be made by cheque, VISA or MasterCard, and may be made in instalments. You will receive information about our activities and all donations will be acknowledged by a receipt for income tax purposes. Donors may act as sponsors for a concert, an artist or a special commission. Suggestions for corporate sponsorship are also very welcome.

Your support is vital to the continuation of these concerts! Please reach us at 416.735.7982 or through our website: www.aldeburghconnection.org

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We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the following in the presentation of today's concert:

The Ontario Arts Council



The City of Toronto through the Toronto Arts Council



David Broadhurst
 Michael and Anne Gough
 James and Connie MacDougall
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We are very grateful for the generous sponsorship of our Discovery Series, and of concerts in the Bayfield Festival of Song, by:
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Aldeburgh is the small town on the east coast of England where Benjamin Britten, Peter Pears and Eric Crozier founded the Festival of Music which flourishes to this day. Artistic Directors **Stephen Ralls** and **Bruce Ubukata** visited and worked there for many summers, as have many of the singers who appear with the Aldeburgh Connection.

Lucia Cesaroni, the Italian-Canadian soprano, is poised to sing Cleopatra in Handel's *Giulio Cesare* with Orchestra London and Tim Vernon, climaxing a very successful year. In November 2009, Lucia made her professional debut in a leading role as Anne Trulove in Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* with Pacific Opera Victoria, where "at the tender age of 26, Lucia Cesaroni sounded just like Anne: sweet, loyal, lyrical, and totally grounded in her sincerity" (*Opera*, UK). She returns to Canada from a successful year in Germany, where she studied with world-renowned soprano Edith Wiens. There she sang as soprano soloist for a fully staged European tour of "Carmina Burana: Monumental Opera" with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the Berlin Symphoniker. Directly preceding her move to Germany, she travelled to Tel Aviv with the International Vocal Arts Institute, where she sang Pamina in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*. At the invitation of the programme's director, Joan Dornemann from the Metropolitan Opera, Lucia has also participated in IVAI's concerts and master classes in New York, Montreal and Virginia.

Hailing from Toronto and holding a Master's Degree in Opera from the University of Toronto, Lucia appeared as Adina in the Opera School's production of Donizetti's *Lelisir d'amore* and Ginevra in Händel's *Ariodante* in 2008. After starring as Susanna in Opera York Toronto's *Le nozze di Figaro*, she reprised the role in Israel with the International Vocal Arts Institute later that season. More 2007-08 season highlights include master classes with Hagan Hagegaard, Adrienne Pieczonka and Russell Braun as well as being a featured soloist in Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Mendelssohn's *Lobegesang*, *Symphony No.2* and in Anton Bruckner's *Te Deum*. In addition, Lucia portrayed the role of Lucia in Benjamin Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* in Toronto.

The young soprano made her Pacific Opera Victoria debut in April 2009 as Erste Dame in *Die Zauberflöte*. Shortly after, she joined Russell Braun in a Liederabend with Off Centre Music and a Puccini gala concert with the Toronto Philharmonia in May 2009. She returned to the Glenn Gould Studio with Off Centre Music this past March to sing a program of Respighi and Verdi songs and arias.

Upcoming spring highlights include Lucia's professional debut with the Aldeburgh Connection recital series in *Toronto: A City of Villages*. She then travels to England for the Britten-Pears Festival in Aldeburgh, having received the Canadian Aldeburgh Foundation's Stratton Scholarship, for performances of Mozart's Da Ponte operas and concerts of Wolf and Strauss Lieder with Roger Vignoles.

Allyson McHardy, "a singer of enormous imagination and versatility, sang a lustrous and energetic Rosina (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*)" according to the San Francisco Chronicle. This triumph followed her debut performances as Olga in San Francisco Opera's *Eugene Onegin* conducted by Ilan Volkov. The striking mezzo-soprano made her debut with New York City Opera as Marchesa Melibea in Rossini's *Il viaggio a Reims* under George Manahan, and recent concert engagements have included *Messiah* for the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, *Elijah* in Montreal (both conducted by Julian Wachner), *Les Nuits d'été* in Bielefeld, Germany and *Alexander Nevsky* for Orchestra London (Timothy Vernon).

Ms McHardy began her 2009-10 season as Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly* for the Canadian Opera Company and has been seen in *Little Women* as Jo for Calgary Opera and with the Warsaw Philharmonic as Adalgisa in *Norma*. As a concert artist, she is featured at Rome's Santa Cecilia in Szymanowski's *Stabat mater* and sang *Messiah* in Madrid with Lopez-Cobos, in Vancouver and with the Elmer Iseler Singers of Toronto. She sings Mahler's *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* for the Alberta Ballet in Calgary and Edmonton and Beethoven's *Missa solemnis* for the Winnipeg Symphony. Further into the future, she debuts at Glyndebourne in 2011 in the title role of Rossini's *Cenerentola*.

Her 2008-09 season included *Messiah* with the Toronto Symphony. In Toulouse, she appeared as Phèdre in a rare staging of Rameau's *Hippolyte et Aricie*, conducted by Emmanuelle Haïm. Minnesota Opera patrons heard her in May of 2009 as Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and she returned to Vancouver Opera for a reprise of Olga in *Eugene Onegin*. Rounding out the season were performances at the Grant Park Festival in Chicago with Carlos Kalmar, singing Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, and at the Scotia Festival with Alain Trudel in Mahler's *Resurrection Symphony*.

Ms McHardy was Carmela in *La vida breve* at Tanglewood with Frühbeck de Burgos and debuted with the Minnesota Orchestra in Honneger's *Jeanne d'Arc*, conducted by Helmuth Rilling. She has recorded two works by Harry Somers, *Serinettes* and *A Midwinter Night's Dream*, after live performances for Soundstreams with the Canadian Children's Opera Chorus. She was also featured in *From Rags to Riches*:

100 Years of American Song with Steven Blier. Some other concert highlights include Concepción in *L'Heure espagnole* under the baton of Seiji Ozawa at Tanglewood and Henze's *Venus und Adonis* at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. Ms McHardy has appeared for Calgary Opera as Mercedes in *Carmen*, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* for Arizona Opera and Dido in *Dido and Aeneas* for the Amherst Early Opera Institute in Massachusetts. Other roles in her repertoire include Giunone in Cavalli's *La Calisto*, Polinesso in *Ariodante* and Jocasta in *Oedipus Rex*. In concert, she has been heard with the Hamilton Philharmonic, Victoria Symphony, Opera in Concert and the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. She is an alumna of the Merola Program at the San Francisco Opera and of the COC Ensemble Studio.

Lawrence Wiliford, the American-born Canadian tenor, lauded for his luminous projection, lyrical sensitivity, and brilliant coloratura, is in high demand in concert, opera, and recital repertoire ranging from works by Monteverdi to contemporary composers. Critics have acclaimed him as an "amazing tenor" (*Vancouver Sun*) having "exceptional power throughout his range" (*Boston Globe*) and as a "phenomenal" and "matchless artist" (*Globe & Mail*).

Mr. Wiliford has collaborated with conductors such as Richard Bradshaw, Bernard Labadie, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Trevor Pinnock, Helmuth Rilling, and Pinchas Zukerman. He has been recognized in particular for his interpretation of Bach and other composers of the Baroque period. A dedicated recitalist, Mr. Wiliford also champions English and North American art song, a passion that has led to engagements across North America and at the Aldeburgh Festival in England. He has recorded on the ATMA Classique & NAXOS labels and will be releasing his debut solo recording *Divine Musick: the late works for tenor and harp* by Benjamin Britten in September 2010.

Highlights of Mr. Wiliford's 2009-2010 season include a number of debuts. He performs the Evangelist in Bach's *Matthäus Passion* at the Berkshire Choral Festival and the *Johannes Passion* at the Baldwin-Wallace Bach Festival and sings Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, Handel's *Messiah* with Symphony Nova Scotia and Calgary Philharmonic and Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* with the Montreal Baroque Festival. Return appearances include performances of Handel's *Messiah* with Boston Baroque, Handel's *Israel in Egypt* with Tafelmusik and Bach's *Mass in B Minor* with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Helmuth Rilling. His opera performances include debuts with Aldeburgh Music as Quint in Britten's *The Turn of the Screw* and Frederic in Gilbert & Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance* with Edmonton Opera.

Recent orchestral highlights include Bach's *Mass in B Minor* with the National Arts Centre Orchestra and the Oregon Bach Festival under the direction of Helmuth Rilling, Bach's *Weihnachts-Oratorium* under the direction of Trevor Pinnock and Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass* under the direction of Pinchas Zukerman (both with The National Arts Centre Orchestra), Handel's *Messiah* with Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra, Bach's *Matthäus Passion* with the Toronto Bach Consort under the

direction of Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Bernard Labadie, Bach's *Magnificat* with Orchestra London, Handel's *Solomon* with The Elora Festival and Haydn's *Die Schöpfung* and Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang* with the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir, and several performances with Les Voix Baroques.

Opera highlights from recent seasons include making his Canadian Opera Company leading role debut in Mozart's *Così fan tutte* as Ferrando on five hours' notice. Also with the Canadian Opera Company he has appeared as Francis Flute in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Roy in James Rolfe's *Swoon*; with Toronto's Opera Atelier as Pedrillo in Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, and as Eumete in Monteverdi's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*; with Opera Lyra Ottawa as Count Almaviva in Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and with Pacific Opera Victoria as Leo in the Canadian premiere of Mark Blitzstein's *Regina*. With MusicFest Vancouver and Boston Baroque he debuted in the title role of Rameau's *Pygmalion*.

Benjamin Covey is one of the most dynamic singer-actors on Canada's vocal scene. With his strong stage presence, outstanding diction and lyrical singing, his performances in both contemporary and standard opera have won attention throughout Canada. Operatic highlights for Benjamin include the title role in 2007 of *Frobisher* (Estacio) and Demetrius in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, both at the Banff Festival of Arts. With Calgary Opera, Benjamin has sung the roles of Wagner (*Faust*) and Jacob and Dandy 3 in *The Ballad of Baby Doe*. His oratorio performances include *Carmina Burana* with Chorus Niagara, *Messiah* with Victoria Symphony Orchestra and Bach's Cantatas Nos. 70 and 110 with Maestro Helmut Rilling at the International Bach Festival.

A former member of the Calgary Opera's Emerging Artist Programme, Benjamin sang Figaro in Ann Hodge's version of *The Barber of Barbhead*, The Clock in Ravel's *L'Enfant et les sortilèges* and Des Grieux in *Le Portrait de Manon*. Roles performed while obtaining his Masters of Opera degree at University of Toronto include Tarquinius in *The Rape of Lucretia* and Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus*.

In 2007, Benjamin was an Encouragement Award winner at the Metropolitan Opera Competition in Vancouver.

On the concert stage, this gifted recitalist is a frequent guest artist with the Aldeburgh Connection of Toronto and has performed with Regina Symphony (*Messiah*), Peterborough Singers (*St. Matthew Passion*) and Hamilton's Bach Elgar Choir (Mozart *Requiem* and Haydn *Lord Nelson Mass*). With Calgary's Festival Chorus in 2008, Benjamin was a featured soloist in Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on Christmas Carols*.

Displaying his passion for contemporary music, Benjamin premiered the role of George in Dean Burry's CBC Radio serial opera *Baby Kintyre*, sang in R. Murray

Schafer's *Princess of the Stars* and performed in Peter Hatch's *Guerrilla Sound Works* at Les Escales de Montreal Improbables. In addition, he has sung lead roles in workshops of both Bramwell Tovey's *The Inventor* for Calgary Opera and John Estacio's *Lillian Alling* for Vancouver Opera.

Highlights of Mr. Covey's 2009/10 season include Marullo with Edmonton Opera's *Rigoletto*, *Messiah* with St. Matthew's Church in Ottawa, and this summer, he joins the prestigious Merola Opera Program to sing Belcore in their production of *L'elisir d'amore*.

The Yellow River Ensemble is a professional Chinese music troupe that performs traditional and contemporary Chinese music on Chinese instruments. The group has been carefully constructed from the best musicians in the region, including faculty from York University and the University of Toronto's music departments, prolific soloists and leading members of the Toronto Chinese Orchestra. Members of the ensemble have performed across Canada, the United States, Poland, Britain, Hong Kong, Singapore and mainland China. Their performances have been broadcast across China on CCTV. The ensemble plays under the leadership of Dr. Kim Chow-Morris, an international performing virtuoso and one of the leading Chinese music performers in Canada.

Shortbread cookies are provided by Carl Strygg at
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